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NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
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PHOOTOGRAPHIC
INTERPRETATION
REPORT

(See inside cover)

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**POSSIBLE 402M SSB/NE-2 MISSILE
FIRING ASSOCIATION, USSR**

~~Top Secret~~



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POSSIBLE 402M SSB/NE-2 MISSILE FIRING ASSOCIATION, USSR

SUMMARY

1. Analysis of photography of the Severodvinsk Shipyard Complex, USSR, from [REDACTED] reveals certain factors concerning the possible association of the recent NE-2 multiple independently targeted reentry vehicle (MIRV) missile firings from the White Sea area with the 402M SSB. These factors suggest the possibility that the 402M fleet ballistic missile submarine (SSB), not Nenoksa Naval Missile Test Center, is the launch platform for the NE-2, which is believed to be slightly longer than the 42-foot SS-N-8 missile. Since the 402M is believed to have missile tubes capable of accommodating SS-N-8 or near SS-N-8-sized missiles, the implication that all Soviet submarines so equipped—17 D class (four under construction), five 402P class, and eight possible variants under construction—may be capable of launching the NE-2 warrants the dissemination of this report.

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2. The factors leading to this conclusion are discussed in this report and include the movements of the 402M submarine, of missile tube ballast cans, and of a missile support ship. [REDACTED]

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3. It should be understood, however, that the conclusions reached in this report are primarily based on photographic intelligence of a circumstantial nature. No attempt has been made to rule out other interpretations and/or opinions.

DISCUSSION

402M Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarine (SSB)

4. Between June 1969 and October 1971 a G-I SSB was converted into the 402M SSB at Severodvinsk Shipyard Yagry Island. The [REDACTED] of the G-I SSB, which contained three SS-N-4 missiles, was replaced by a [REDACTED] sail, which is believed to be capable of housing six SS-N-8-sized missile tubes (Figure 1). The identification of the 402M weapon system is largely based on the observation of SS-N-8 ballast cans in and near the submarine [REDACTED]

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5. The 402M SSB was fitted out at Yagry Island from late 1971 through September 1974 (Table 1). [REDACTED] white water was observed aft of the submarine stern indicating propeller activity associated with dock trials in progress. These trials usually precede sea trials, which may have occurred during a period of very sparse [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the submarine had been placed on the south shelf of the ship lift basin at Yagry Island, where it remained [REDACTED] possibly undergoing posttrials adjustments [REDACTED] it was again in the water and remained at the main quay at Yagry Island [REDACTED] the 402M had departed the yard.

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Ballast Cans

6. [REDACTED] six SS-N-8 ballast cans were observed on the quay near the submarine at Yagry Island. By 15 November the number of cans had been reduced to three. This count remained [REDACTED] when six cans were again seen. This movement of ballast cans corresponds to the postdock-trials period for the 402M SSB and indicates that the 402M may have been on sea trials during this period of sparse photographic coverage.

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7. When the 402M SSB went to sea again in October 1975 it took only four of the six SS-N-8 ballast cans, leaving two cans on the quay. This analysis of ballast can movements may indicate that the remaining two 402M missile tubes contained missiles, possibly the NE-2.

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Table 1. Chronology of Events Associated with the Possible 402M SSB and NE-2 Missile Firings

402M SSB	In Conversion	FITTING OUT								Departed Yard	402 M/402 K at NSSSF*	Departed Yard	Position II, West Quay, Yagry Island
					Dock Trials	← Poss Sea Trials →	On Shelf						
SS-N-8 BALLAST CANS ON QUAY	0	0	4/6	4 Plus 2 In 402M	6	3	6	6	6	2	2	2	5
AMGA AEM	NOT PRESENT								Position III, East Quay, Shipyard 402	Position V, East Quay, Shipyard 402			
NE-2 FIRINGS	NO FIRING ACTIVITY												

*Nuclear Submarine Special Support Facility

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8. [REDACTED], the 402M returned to Severodvinsk but was berthed at the Nuclear Submarine Special Support Facility. The number of ballast cans remained unchanged on the quay at Yagry Island. Then, [REDACTED] a NE-2 missile was launched from the White Sea area,¹ only a few hours' sailing time from Severodvinsk. [REDACTED] the 402M SSB was absent from the yard. [REDACTED] Severodvinsk, the 402M SSB had returned to Yagry Island and was berthed at the west quay with three more SS-N-8 ballast cans on the quay nearby.

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AMGA AEM

9. Concurrent with these September-to-November movements was the arrival of the AMGA missile support ship (AEM) at the east quay of Shipyard 402. The AMGA AEM is currently assessed as having an SS-N-8 supply/loading capability and has been observed supplying D-class SSBNs in the Northern Fleet operating bases. The AMGA AEM arrived at Shipyard 402 for the first time [REDACTED] and moored at position III on the east quay. At that time the six SS-N-8 ballast cans were still on the quay at Yagry Island adjacent to the 402M SSB. [REDACTED] the AMGA AEM had moved to position V on the east quay at Shipyard 402, and the 402M SSB had departed the yard leaving two ballast cans on the quay. The AMGA AEM did not move [REDACTED]

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10. The presence of the AMGA AEM at the yard is not fully understood at this time. The assumption that the AMGA AEM loaded a new or modified missile of SS-N-8 size into the 402M SSB might provide an explanation. Sufficient quayside cranes already exist at the yard for normal SS-N-8 loading operations, as evidenced by the numerous D-class and 402P SSBN sea trials/missile firings supported there previously.

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D-class SSBN Patrol Areas

13. When this 402M SSB (with SS-N-8-sized missile tubes) and the NE-2 association theory is linked to the new D-class patrol areas, 1,000 nm closer to its North American targets than the previous patrol areas in the Barents Sea, the possibility of a shorter range MIRV SS-N-8 in development seems more plausible.

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